OOTW, Raids and Tactical Surprise

A Monograph
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ABSTRACT

OOTW, RAIDS, AND TACTICAL SURPRISE by MAJ Todd A. Megill, USA, 39 pages.

This monograph examines the concept of tactical surprise and its use by raiding forces in Operations Other than War (OOTW). It discusses the nature of the OOTW environment and its relationship to the creation of tactical surprise. Surprise is defined, in its moral and physical/material aspects, as seeking to shift the balance of combat power and allow forces to achieve success out of proportion to their actual size. The difficulties of creating surprise during raids are examined in operations conducted in Panama and Somalia.

This monograph first examines the OOTW environment and attempts to describe and characterize it in terms of limiting raiding forces' ability to create surprise. The first operation was during the invasion of Panama. The raids were carried out to degrade the effectiveness of the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) by isolating and capturing the dictator of Panama, Manual Noriega. The raiding forces succeeded in creating tactical surprise, paralyzing PDF leadership, and forcing Noriega into hiding. The second operation was a series of raids conducted to capture General Aideed, a tribal warlord who was violently opposing the UN's efforts to reestablish a national government in Somalia. The raiding force was unable to create surprise and suffered a serious counterattack. The resulting casualties led to a complete change in American foreign policy and the eventual withdrawal of US support for the UN mission.

The success or failure of raids in the OOTW environment will always be linked to the ability of the raiding forces to generate surprise. Deception and OPSEC operations create the potential for moral surprise and high tempo operations work to produce material surprise. Raids can be successfully conducted in the OOTW environment but will always be balanced on the razor's edge between success and failure.

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The purpose of this paper is to examine the concept of tactical surprise and its use by raiding forces in the Operations Other Than War (OOTW) environment. We will look at the components of tactical surprise and their effects. The paper will also attempt to broadly characterize the OOTW environment. The result will provide some ideas on the limitations and capabilities that surprise provides to a raiding force in the OOTW environment and some conclusions on how we can generate and utilize surprise.

Commanders seek to apply overwhelming combat power to achieve victory at least cost. Speed in applying the combat power pays off in surprise. Surprise is the ability to strike the enemy at a time, place or in a manner for which he is unprepared[1]. High tempo operations are operations that occur inside the enemy's decision cycle often resulting in surprise[2]. Army doctrine states that surprise delays enemy reactions, overloads and confuses his command and control, induces psychological shock in enemy soldiers and leaders, and reduces the coherence of the enemy defense[3]. Surprise is an Army principle of war that applies to conflicts in both war and OOTW.

Surprise seeks to shift the balance of combat power and allow forces to achieve success out of proportion to the effort expended. The two types of surprise(s) operate together on the battlefield to affect the enemy. Moral

surprise means that the enemy does not know he is going to be attacked. Material surprise means the enemy knows that he is are going to be attacked but cannot do anything about it[4]. Additionally, effective Operations Security (OPSEC) for surprise operations is critical.

One of the missions that the Army conducts requiring surprise is the raid. The Army will execute raids across the spectrum of conflict[5]. Raids create situations that permit the seizing and maintenance of political and military initiative. In the multipolar post-cold war security environment, the likelihood of the US Army conducting raids will increase. Raids are characterized as usually small-scale operations involving swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, confuse the enemy, temporarily seize an objective, or destroy a target. It ends with a planned withdrawal upon completion of the mission[6]. High tempo operations are a necessity in conducting raids to maintain the initiative and achieve tactical surprise. This allows the limited forces involved to achieve their objectives without suffering crippling casualties. High tempo operations use firepower and maneuver to build combat power that generates both physical and psychological effects[7]. The result is that we give the enemy no opportunity to respond with coordinated or effective action.

However, the OOTW environment contains within it elements that work against Army raiding forces achieving tactical surprise.   In two previous operations in OOTW environments the Army used raids in attempts to degrade or deny enemy commanders the ability to lead and communicate with their forces.

The first raiding operation was during Operation Just Cause, the invasion of Panama.   The raids were a series of high tempo operations carried out by US Special Operations Forces (SOF) to gain both strategic and tactical objectives. Their purpose was to degrade the effectiveness of the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) by isolating and capturing Manuel Noriega, the dictator of Panama[8].

The second operation was a series of raids conducted by Task Force Ranger to capture General Aideed, a tribal leader and warlord, who was against United Nations' plans to reestablish a functioning national government in Somalia[9]. The two raiding operations were similar in that they focused on the seizure of an individual in his own operating environment.   The raids both occurred primarily in urban terrain.   The local populations ranged from friendly to actively hostile to the US presence.   In both cases the raiding forces did not seize the target of the raid. However, in Panama they successfully accomplished the objective of isolating Noriega from his PDF.   In Somalia

Aideed's clansmen ambushed the raiding forces involved. The
resulting US casualties led to the withdrawal of US support
to the UNOSOM II mission and its eventually collapse. The
unsuccessful raid had a major impact in Somalia's return to
anarchy.

This paper will discuss the raiding operations to see
if they were successful in achieving tactical surprise. It
will attempt to identify the type of tactical surprise
generated against the threat. Finally, it will draw some
conclusions about creating tactical surprise and make
recommendations on how they might conduct future raids.

<center>The OOTW Environment</center>

What is the Operations Other than War (OOTW)
environment? In the broadest sense it is anywhere that US
Army forces are conducting missions without being at war[10].
Operations other than War range from peaceful nation
building to the use of force.

Since the end of the cold-war the primary focus for
Army OOTW operations has been in the third world areas
usually in political, economic, or social instability. The
infrastructure of the third world is limited. Manufacturing
normally amounting to less than 25 percent of the states'
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and agricultural jobs usually

making up over 30 percent or more of the states'
employment[11]. The third world is virtually unbankable. Its
level of indebtedness and its inability to repay loans makes
it increasingly unattractive for foreign investment[12].
There are often a limited number of ports, airfields, paved
roads and railroads in the regions.

The third world is becoming increasingly urbanized with
two out of five people living in urban areas. Urban
populations are growing twice as fast as rural
populations[13]. This is creating large, sprawling slums and
population foci. These urban centers are the centers of or
symbols of power in the nation. They contain most of the
population and economic power in a region. Fifteen of the
twenty largest urban areas today are found in the third
world[14].

Explosive population growth also characterizes the
third world[15]. The high birth rate produces a population of
the young. The low average of the population places extreme
pressure on governments to provide basic education and
employment. The population pressure, when coupled with
limited economic capabilities and fiscal resources, often
leads the governments of the third world to use
authoritarian measures to coerce or control their
populations[16]. The lack of trained managers and bureaucrats
further encourages the use of force to maintain the limited

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infrastructure in place. The rapid population growth and
the departure of colonial governments and the creation of
less capable local regimes. The corruption and incompetence
of the local governments have led to political and economic
collapse in many parts of the third world[17].

Third world regions are habitually unable to provide
the minimum amount of foodstuffs to support their
populations. More than five percent of their infant
populations are chronically undernourished. The third world
is a continual importer of basic grains, mostly from the
more efficient farms of the industrialized world[18]. The
third world suffers chronic famines that in turn creates
tremendous population migration as refugees move into urban
areas or cross borders seeking relief[19]

The third world is home to endemic ethnic conflicts and
tensions. The process of incorporation into the global
economy and social changes caused by the pervasiveness of
modern communications are separating peoples from their
local identities. Identification along more basic ethnic,
religious or economic classifications is growing. This is
further corroding the already weak nation state as a source
of identity[20].

Many third world governments, having weak internal
sovereignty, tend to be authoritarian in nature. The

perceived threat from the disgruntled population leads to the regimes to stockpile large quantities of weapons. The weapons stockpiled are mostly conventional small arms. There are limited amounts of armored vehicles, warships, surface to air missiles, or aircraft due to their expense and the lack of technical infrastructure to maintain complex subsystems[21]. There are few armies in the third world that are anywhere nearly as capable as those of the United States. The end of the cold-war has exacerbated the decline in third world militaries. The US and former Soviet Union have greatly reduced their previous arms shipments. The inefficient bureaucracy and poor infrastructure have limited the control of the small arms. The weapons diffusion throughout the population has encouraged banditry and criminality.

We can characterize the third world as states or regions that are increasingly poor, with marginal infrastructures, and heavily populated. The authoritarian governments often lack strong popular support and the population lacks a strong national identity. The regions are heavily armed with unsophisticated weapons and are riddled with endemic violence, criminality, or ethnic conflict[22].

The OOTW environment of the third world holds additional challenges for the Army. The size of the third

world will require that US forces deploy from the continental US or from other areas. The deployment will require joint operations to even reach the probable area of operations. Army forces will require quantities of sea and airlift[23] to deploy. Additionally, we will most likely conduct the operations with other countries in combined operations. The limited infrastructure and high level of criminality and violence will place tremendous burdens on the deployed forces. The local population will have little in common with deploying US forces and could see them as intruders into local politics or as ripe targets for criminality. The deployed units will need to provide most or all of their in country support and place heavy demands on both physical and personal security. In addition, the limited nature of operations in the OOTW environment often restricts the use of force as outlined in rules of engagement (ROE). Foreign policy will restrict army units from using the full capabilities of their weapon systems and training. Major restrictions will often be placed on the use of indirect fire or area suppressive weapons to cause as few casualties as possible and limit collateral damage.[24] Throughout operations the world news media will be present, monitoring every action of US forces[25].

US operations in the third world will often be characterized as having intangible threats and sudden in nature. The lack of a pronounced threat to US interests

often means that the objectives and endstates for the US
forces will be vague and subject to frequent change.
Deployments will be logistically intensive and into regions
where US forces will have had little previous historical
interest. American forces will often be perceived as
intruders or targets for exploitation.

The Components of Surprise

Surprise is crucial in conducting successful raiding
operations. Surprise seeks to shift the balance of combat
power and allow forces to achieve success out of proportion
to their actual size[26]. There are two types of surprises
that occur on the battlefield, moral and material[27]. Moral
surprise produces a psychological shock on an enemy that is
taken unawares. Material surprise produces a physical
effect. High tempo operations create both psychological and
physical surprise by paralyzing or delaying the enemy's
reaction to a strike[28].

Third world opponents may be particularly vulnerable to
raids. Their armed forces or tribal bands have
unsophisticated weapons and focus on immediate and local
foes. They are often unprepared for meeting sophisticated
external threats from far away. This gives raiding forces
an initial advantage.

Surprise is seldom complete and the moral effect can be lost before operational execution or completion. To counter the loss of surprise a raiding force must be able to exploit this advantage to maintain the initiative. This can be done by increasing firepower, tactical mobility, agility or flexibility in order to keep the enemy guessing.

Delays in launching raids by the US can occur because of policy disputes, bureaucratic inertia, and public discussion-- all are components of an open society. This in turn endangers security and may cost the raiding force the advantage of surprise.

We exercise operations security (OPSEC) to deny the enemy information about our operations. OPSEC as a component of the military principle of security[29] and is used to reduce risk and protect those forces involved. OPSEC works to deny five pieces of information about our operations[30]: whether the raid will actually happen, the timing, the location, its target, and the means of the raid. If an attack is to take the enemy by surprise then it must find him wrong in his predictions[31].

Two US military operations, Operation Just Cause in Panama and UNOSOM II in Somalia, contained raids as part of their operational design. In both instances the raids'

planning, execution, and success were based upon the ability
to create and maintain surprise in an OOTW environment.

THE RAIDS

PANAMA:

Operation Just Cause was carried out to depose the
dictator Manuel Noriega as head of state and create the
environment necessary to restore a working democracy to
Panama. The invasion occurred 20-24 December 1989 after a
long series of provocations by Noriega and diplomatic
pressure by the Reagan and Bush administrations[32].

A joint force of more than 7,000 service members
deployed from the United States to Panama supported by US
Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) forces already present. The
entire operation had the flavor of a gigantic raid as the
forces simultaneously struck at targets in 26 locations.
Multiple attacks denied the Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF)
forces the ability to resist by applying overwhelming combat
power at the critical point dislocating the PDF's command
and control[33]. In addition USSOUTHCOM gave the Special
Operations community the specific mission of capturing
Manuel Noriega to ensure that dislocation and achieve a
strategic objective[34]. Task Force Black, made up around the
3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group with other SOF

units, received the actual mission of capturing Noriega as part of the Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF)[35].

The Invasion gained most of its objectives. US forces achieved surprise and rapidly neutralized the PDF with minimal US and civilian casualties. However, Noriega managed to elude capture for several days until he fled to the papal nuncio on 24 December. After several days of negotiations, on 3 January, he turned himself over to US authorities[36].

The US military had more than adequate intelligence to support planning for the raids. However, the OOTW environment made specific targeting difficult. The forward basing of US forces in Panama simplified intelligence gathering[37]. A plan called Prayer Book/Blue Spoon for the invasion of Panama to restore democracy had been in existence since 1987[38]. Units were in place and collecting intelligence years prior to the invasion and had overcome most of the language and societal barriers. The 470th Military Intelligence Brigade was in permanent residence in direct support of the USSOUTHCOM Commander's intelligence requirements[39]. USSOUTHCOM, with its headquarters in the target's area of operations, allowed the intelligence community, particularly military intelligence units linked to the invasion forces, to have assets in position. In May 1989 the US army and Marines deployed additional forces into

Panama under Operation Nimrod Dancer[40]. The forces included the Army's 107th MI Battalion and USMC Security Force Company. US forces had an intelligence architecture in place to support the raid.

A major oversight in intelligence planning was not allowing members of the Intelligence Support Activity (ISA), a specialized collection organization normally supporting special operations forces, to deploy to Panama before the invasion. There seemed to be disagreements between the CIA and USSOUTHCOM over covert collection that caused this to happen[41]. Though there were plenty of human intelligence collection assets available in Panama having intelligence specialists trained in supporting JSOTF/SOF requirements on hand would have been very useful. Though intelligence gathering was extensive, Noriega still managed to elude the raiding forces hot on his trail.

The intelligence structure allowed for an in depth mission analysis and supplied the planners with accurate dispositions of PDF forces. It paid big dividends during the abortive October coup against Noriega. Various PDF units and their responses to Noriega's calls for help to put down the coup were monitored. This provided a great deal of information determining their degree of personal loyalty to Noriega and prioritizing the attacks of the invasion forces[42].

The densely populated urban areas and terrain of many of the targets made it difficult for the raiding forces. Because of the terrain, there were ROE restrictions to limit civilian casualties[43]. Current Army doctrine states that overwhelming firepower is used to saturate the battlefield and create overwhelming combat power[44]. Although the application of firepower would destroy the PDF forces, it would also damage many nearby civilian structures and cause noncombatant casualties. So, LTG Steiner, the JTF Commander, relied on overwhelming numbers of US troops to surround and seize PDF facilities rather than use firepower to stand off destroy them[45].

The mood of the Panamanian people worked in the Americans' favor. Most Panamanians were at least neutral toward the invasion forces if not openly supportive because of violent assaults on peaceful protesters and massive election fraud. Noriega was not a popular figure. Only those that owned their position from his patronage in the PDF were loyal. Noriega's lack of popular support made intelligence collection easier and many instances of Panamanians helping US forces occurred during the invasion. Noriega's limited base of support made it easier to isolate him.

The time available before the execution of the operation allowed the creation and training of a workable chain of command and effective organizations[46]. The initial planning for the invasion called for a gradual build up of five brigades under direct USSOUTHCOM control that would then be transferred to 18th Airborne Corps. When General Thurman became the Commander of USSOUTHCOM and received additional guidance from General Powell, he modified the plan. He placed 18th Airborne Corps in immediate control to maximize surprise, overwhelm the enemy, minimize casualties, and limit collateral damage[47]. Units rehearsed on full scale mockups of their assigned targets[48]. A major component of the success of the invasion force was the luxury of time to train its staffs, organizations, and individual soldiers on the specifics of their missions.

The resources available to the raiding forces were adequate. The long planning time allowed the military departments to thoroughly research requirements and make forces available. The commanders and staffs of the invasion forces were able to quietly visit Panama before the actual invasion and conduct a command post exercise rehearsal of the operation[49]. LTG Steiner himself visited the area several times between May and December. He set up a small planning cell at Fort Clayton as a command and control advance element with the mission to keep him informed and refine the contingency planning[50]. The limited nature of

the threat and forward location of USSOUTHCOM allowed
detailed logistics planning. The need for operational and
tactical surprise required that the invasion forces deploy
from the US and placed enormous burdens on available
airlift[51]. In addition the tremendous numbers of aircraft
in the area of operations created air traffic control
problems.

The invasion forces practiced excellent deception as
the enormous train up and marshaling of the invasion forces
was not connected with USSOUTHCOM's activities in Panama or
the Bush administration's decision to invade. President
Bush gave the appearance of normalcy by holding a staff
Christmas Party just prior to the NCA meeting in which he
gave the execution order for the invasion[52].

USSOUTHCOM forces conducted a series of internal
movements prior to the invasion and raids to determine PDF
responses and desensitize them to US forces' movement[53].
Since October US forces stationed in Panama conducted "Sand
Flea" exercises to exercise US freedom of movement rights
under the Panama Canal Treaty and as a cover for contingency
plans[54]. At least one battalion ran twice a week convoys
from Fort Sherman to Fort Clayton or from Howard Air Force
Base across the Isthmus and back. These exercises not only
got the PDF used to the movement of US forces throughout the
area they closely mirrored the actual missions the units

would perform during the invasion[55]. The JTF commander

opposed the premature deployment of the invasion forces to

ensure surprise. This rule was only broken 48 hours before

the invasion when they smuggled four Sheridan tanks and four

Apache attack helicopters into Howard Air Force Base to

support critical attacks[56]. Noriega and the PDF were aware

of the worsening state of affairs with the United States but

had no foreknowledge of the actual invasion.

Detailed planning and training overcame the limitations

of raiding in an OOTW environment. The slow development of

the crisis provided the time to prepare, allowing the

Americans to create a well staffed, trained, and organized

chain of command. Units and staffs were able to rehearse

and train to a very high level of readiness. The long

gestation period of the plan allowed adequate resources to

be identified and solutions developed to answer most

deficiencies. The invasion planners recognized and

evaluated the risk entailed by using large amounts of

airlift as acceptable in relation to the mobility and

optempo the force required.

Though the PDF was a military organization, its focus

was on governmental functions, internal coercion, and

control of the population rather than defense against

external threats. It spent its time propping up the Noriega

regime and exploiting their fellow Panamanians. The PDF had

massive quantities of small arms, 12 small patrol boats, 37
aircraft, primarily for transport, but no tanks[57]. It
lacked the training and equipment to conduct combined arms
maneuver and focus combat power. LTG Steiner believed that
the PDF was highly centralized and capable of only modest
action without direction from above. His analysis proved to
be accurate[58]. The PDF did not put up a coherent defense
against the invasion forces.

When the invasion began on 20 December 1989, the PDF
was surprised and unprepared. There was some sporadic
resistance[59]. At least one SOF helicopter was shot down and
there were many sniping incidents throughout the invasion[60].
Individuals and small units fought when cornered or if they
had time to overcome their initial shock.

After the invasion, American forces discovered that the
PDF had several plans for defending against an American
supported coup or invasion. Codenamed Operation Montana the
PDF planned to take to the mountainous interior of the
country to conduct insurgency operations. The paramilitary
"dignity battalions" which over an eighteen month period had
received basic military training, were armed, and
indoctrinated. If Operation Montana was executed, they
would provide recruits and auxiliary support. There were at
least two other plans named Genesis and Exodus that called
for kidnapping Americans and transporting them to the

interior[61]. During the actual invasion, the PDF took a small group of Smithsonian researchers hostage for several days until the PDF soldiers saw the results of the invasion and quietly released them[62]. Another group of Americans staying at the Marriot Hotel in Panama City was threatened by the PDF and had to be rescued by US forces[63]. These were the only instances of the PDF attempting to take any hostages. Except for sniping attacks, the dignity battalions did not attempt to contest the invasion. The insurgency did not occur because of the moral surprise generated by the invasion and the rapid dislocation of PDF command and control structures.

Besides Noriega, there was no one with the authority to send out the order to execute any plan. He was immediately isolated because of the raids and chose to flee rather than fight, so the PDF command structure was damaged from the start. Noriega never attempted to organize a defense against the invasion while fleeing from the raiding forces. While on the run Captain Castillo, his bodyguard and deputy chief of security, asked him whether they should take to the jungles or mountains to mount a guerrilla war. This was the concept planned for in Operation Montana. "Noriega's reaction to the idea was tentatively favorable but he stated that they (Captain Castillo and Noriega) would both get heart attacks if they tried it[64]." Once the invasion was underway Noriega became a fugitive in his own country. One

PDF officer on Noriega's Staff during the invasion stated, "The whole infrastructure of our forces was destroyed in the first hour.[65]" During the invasion several PDF officers gathered in towns bordering the interior of Panama awaiting the orders to begin Operation Montana. No orders came and the officers eventually surrendered. Without the dictator's leadership the PDF soldiers' willingness to fight evaporated. Some PDF units during the invasion began movement toward the Comandancia but were interdicted by SOF teams or gunships. Others were caught in their barracks by the swiftness of the assault.

However, the OOTW environment made it difficult for the raiding forces to seize Noriega. Once the invasion was underway, the dense urban terrain, large population, Noriega's small target signature, his deception activities, and personal security plans made him hard to find. During his flight from the raiding forces Noriega did not attempt to rally the PDF and was concerned only with his personal safety.

During the invasion, TF Black conducted more than 40 raids to capture Noriega. They struck at all known and suspected Noriega hideouts. USSOUTHCOM maintained an intelligence watch team on the dictator for weeks prior to the invasion and identified possible target locations and followed Noriega's daily activities. However, Noriega

slipped surveillance on the evening of the invasion and the raiders were unsuccessful. TF Black thought that his constant movement was denying them success. In reality Noriega was only moving within Panama City and all reports of his movement farther afield were generated by his deception efforts.[66] Once the initial surprise of the invasion wore off, the small signature of his personal party, deception, and the sheer size of the urban environment of Panama prevented the raiding forces from finding him.

Once the invasion and the raids began, Noriega moved every four hours in an unmarked blue Range Rover, traveling with only with his body guard and loyal secretary[67]. When he arrived at the papal nuncio, US Special Operations forces were one hour behind[68].

The United States achieved tactical surprise in the invasion and associated raids conducted during the invasion of Panama. The war of nerves and diplomatic exchanges desensitized the Noriega regime to the possibility of an American invasion. Noriega and the PDF did not believe an invasion was imminent and did not know or have foreknowledge of the invasion. They were also surprised by the operations tempo of the invasion. Noriega's belief that an invasion would not occur allowed the US forces to gain strategic and operational surprise. The use of airborne and airmobile

forces allowed a degree of separation between the US staging bases and their targets that provided excellent OPSEC. The distances effectively shielded their preparations from the Noriega regime. The unexpected arrival and tremendous weight of numbers created moral and material surprise that multiplied the effectiveness of the invasion forces and the raiders.

SOMALIA

The Bush administration in 1992 ordered the initial deployment of US forces into Somalia to protect UN and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attempting to deliver famine relief supplies as part of the UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM I)[69]. The US forces initially brought ashore overwhelming firepower and mass to deter opposition and support the relief effort. By January, the American forces of the UNITAF (Unified Task Force, Somalia) numbered over 25,000 with 16,000 actually on the ground. Led by the well-armed US forces the relief mission went as planned and suffered few casualties. Once the situation was stabilized and relief supplies were successfully delivered, UNITAF elements were withdrawn and control passed to forces of UNOSOM II. UNOSOM I was considered a success as the various clans chose not to openly attack the UN forces. The clan leaders knew that the UN relief mission was to be short.

They could use the pause in fighting to refit.[70]   UNOSOM I

successfully adverted the mass starvation of the Somali

population[71].

The initial success encouraged the UN Secretary General

Boutras-Boutras Ghali to set his sights higher to rebuild

Somalia as a nation[72].   The Clinton administration met

Boutras Ghali's expansive ideas with favor.   This tacit

approval came while US forces were being withdrawn according

to the   Bush administration's concept of limited military

support to humanitarian operations.   The limited

humanitarian mission of UNOSOM I was expanded into the

nation building operation that was UNOSOM II.   When Boutras

Ghali and the UN announced their new plan of nation building

the various Somali warlords, previously quiescent, saw the

UN presence as a threat[73].

Realizing that the UN plan could unify the country and

break their power, the warlords would look for ways to drive

out the UN.   General Aideed, leader of the Somali National

Alliance (SNA), an organization based around an single sub-

clan grouping, was the most active opponent to the new UN

mission[74].   He organized several ambushes of UN forces.   The

spring and summer saw a gradual escalation of fighting as

Aideed's SNA militiamen attacked UN outposts and ambushed

patrols in response to the UN efforts to reduce his power[75].

This resulted in the use of US attack helicopters and AC-130 Spectre gunships to provide cover to the forces in contact.

On 4 June 1993, in response to an inspection of an SNA arms site by the UN, the SNA began a series of attacks against the UN Pakistani troops. The attacks escalated until the American Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) and Italian armored units were called out to rescue them. These attacks resulted in the deaths of 26 UN Pakistani soldiers.[76] The UN and US expanded their efforts by using attack helicopters and AC-130 Spectre gunships to attack SNA targets and provide cover to UN forces in contact[77]. The firepower of the gunships caused many Somali casualties and generated lots of anti-UN/US sentiment. The UN placed a reward for Aideed on 17 June and asked the US for support in capturing Aideed. Task Force Ranger was given the mission.

. Task Force Ranger arrived in Somalia on 22 August 1993 and shortly began operations to capture Aideed[78]. Task Force Ranger was made up of US Army Rangers, Delta Force operators, and aviators of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR)[79]. The immediate employment of the task force did not allow for adequate intelligence preparation of information on Aideed nor allow the force to become familiarized with the area.

Somalia was a very difficult place to conduct raiding operations. The four year long civil war had destroyed most the country's infrastructure[80]. The Somalis saw Mogadishu as a center of power and considered control over the capital as critical[81]. In was a refugee swollen urban area of half a million people[82]. The roads, port and airfield were in poor shape though they had seen limited improvements during UNOSOM I operations[83]. The urban sprawl was extremely restrictive to movement and offered many opportunities for ambush. This greatly restricted the movement of TF Ranger and forced them to rely almost exclusively on helicopters for mobility.

The population of Somali is remarkably homogeneous. They are predominately Sunni Muslims and speak dialects of a common language[84]. However, most loyalty rests in clan and sub-clan groupings. There is only a limited sense of nationalism and the tribal organization promotes a warrior ethic based upon raiding and banditry. Historically the Somali culture glorifies warriors and the mistrust of outsiders. They see foreigners as blatant colonizers or sources of plunder[85].

The long preceding civil war from 1988 to 1990 further exacerbated this chaotic environment and resulted in more than a million deaths[86]. The civil war also destroyed what little nationalism that existed. The people moved as

refugees into urban slums or squatter towns looking for relief from a series of poor harvests that brought widespread famine[87].

There had been no central government in Somalia for nearly two years[88] until the arrival of the UN in 1993. Governing had devolved into local militia leaders or village elder councils. The tribes' militias had no aircraft, naval vessels, or armored vehicles. However, pre-cold war shipments and the civil war made the country awash in small arms. This included rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), recoilless rifles, and heavy machine guns. The most powerful weapons available were a few mortars and civilian wheeled vehicles mounting machine guns or recoilless rifles known as technicals. Personal and tribal feuds were common and there were no constraints on employing firepower[89]. The only limitation to fighting seemed the amount of on-hand ammunition.

The militias had little military organization beyond tribal loyalties and no formal training or the ability to conduct combined arms operations. However, there was a warrior ethic and a willingness to fight almost anyone that they perceived as a threat. All Somalis had the knowledge of the raid and ambush that they learned from the cradle[90].

The raiding forces had very limited knowledge of Aideed's whereabouts. The transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II resulted in the withdrawal of many of the American troops. The US presence declined from 16,000 on the ground to slightly more than 4,000 personnel[91]. The withdrawal included intelligence personnel with most of the remaining soldiers being logistics specialists supporting the UN forces. In addition, the withdrawal of most of the US combat units resulted in fewer patrols in the city of Mogadishu. The remaining UN soldiers lost most of the initiative after suffering numerous casualties in the spring and summer. They conducted fewer patrols and stayed close to their static positions and perimeter defenses[92]. This in turn resulted in much less intelligence reporting. TF Ranger brought with them some intelligence personnel who worked with CIA operatives to find Aideed. However, the intelligence specialists belonging to TF Ranger had little time to prepare and gather information before the raids commenced.

The turn against Aideed alienated the members of his clan against UNOSOM and made intelligence gathering nearly impossible in the areas that he controlled. This resulted in fewer people willing to provide information. In addition the UN's decision to single out Aideed and their lack of success in capturing him increased his stature in the minds of his supporters. Aideed went to ground, hiding in the

territories he controlled, In July, after his forces
conducted attacks on UN Moroccan troops, his whereabouts
could not be confirmed[93].

The resources available to TF Ranger were limited. The
transition of operations from US to UN control during UNOSOM
I to UNOSOM II resulted in the redeployment of many units
and assets that had formerly been available. The Marine
Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and the naval carrier battle group
that had spearheaded UNOSOM I went elsewhere. The AC-130
Spectre gunships had been withdrawn in August in response to
public outcry and administration concerns over the many
casualties they had inflicted on the Somalis while
supporting UN operations in August. US forces that could
support TF Ranger were only one light infantry battalion
without attached artillery or armored vehicles[94]. The Task
Force's ability to conduct a rapid withdrawal was limited to
the use of their own helicopters and 5-ton trucks and
HUMMV's belonging to the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) of the
10th Mountain Division[95]. TF Ranger had a separate chain of
command outside the UN's control. This separate chain of
command resulted in TF Ranger being unable to use all the
assets in theater in support of their operations[96]. TF
Ranger did not have access to any of the armored vehicles
belonging to the UN forces[97]. They had requested armored
vehicles earlier but were denied by the Secretary of
Defense[98]. TF Ranger was organized with highly capable

helicopter gunships but there was only a limited number. Additional AH-1 Cobra gunships belonging to the US contingent of the UN forces were available but had little capability to operate at night[99]. TF Ranger was the only force in Mogadishu conducting night or offensive operations at the time.

The raids conducted by TF Ranger had little chance of effective OPSEC. Aideed was the announced target of the raiding force even before its arrival into country[100]. TF Ranger conducted six raids prior to its last raid on the night of 2-3 October[101]. The raids were all conducted in Mogadishu and occurred in the space of a month. Each raid followed the pattern of night heliborne assault landing by Rangers who secured the targeted building for Delta Force operator who cleared the rooms and seized an occupants. The helicopters then landed within the perimeter and the raiding partly withdrew. Previous raids had taught the SNA the raiding force's techniques and procedures and pointed out that the TF's mobility was totally tied to highly vulnerable helicopters[102]. The raiding force telegraphed its punches by repeating the same type of mission, in the same urban areas, without other operations ongoing to mask their activities. TF Ranger gradually lost the ability to generate any surprise.

Moral surprise was lost before the arrival of the task force. The target of the raids, General Aideed, had been warned by the UN resolution condemning the SNA's ambushes and Admiral Howe's posting a reward for his capture[103]. The areas that the raiding force traveled into were SNA strongholds and would result in spontaneous attacks on any UN/US force[104]. TF Ranger did not try to deceive Aideed or the SNA about any aspect of the raid. There was only one target and only one mission: Get Aideed!

Prior to the final raid by TF Ranger an MH-60 helicopter on an aerial sniping mission was shot down by a gang fired RPG-7. Aideed and the SNA knew what the target of the raiding force was, where the force would be operating, and how the raiding force was conducting its raids.

The raid on 2-3 October began like the previous six. The target of the raid was a building near the Olympic Hotel in which intelligence had reported that Aideed would be meeting with several of his lieutenants. They decided to undertake the raid in daylight in hopes of snatching Aideed. At 1540 hours, sixteen helicopters appeared over the building and disgorged their loads of rangers and Delta Force operators. The rangers would secure a perimeter and the Delta Force personnel would seize the target. In about 20 minutes they had seized 24 prisoners, but no Aideed. A

ground convoy of armored HUMMV's and sand bagged trucks moved out to pick up the prisoners at the secured raid objective. However, as the convoy appeared SNA activity picked up and the perimeter began to take an increasing volume of fire. Initially using small arms, the SNA militiamen began to use RPGs. Shortly after that the first MH-60 helicopter was shot down, crashing 300 yards away from the target site. The mission changed with this act from withdrawal to a rescue.

The rangers and Delta personnel moved the raid objective toward the crash site while other helicopters attempted to land and evacuate the downed personnel. The raiding force made it to the crashed helicopter just before the SNA militiamen. The crash attracted a growing crowd of people that the SNA gunmen joined and began an earnest game of armed cat and mouse with the rangers. The ground commander ordered the convoy, which was under heavy fire, to withdrawal with the prisoners and wounded back to the airfield. The SNA struck a second helicopter with an RPG round and it crash-landed two miles from the raid objective. At this point the task force had lost all of its mobility. The remaining helicopters could keep up suppressive fires around the rangers but could not land to pick them up. Except for hand over hand climbing there was no way for the raiding force to reenter the helicopters.

The word when out immediately to the QRF of the US 10th
Mountain Division to aid the encircled Americans. The QRF
moved toward the second downed helicopter but was eventually
slowed and then stopped by Somali fire. The Somali gunmen
were not very accurate but they appeared in tremendous
numbers and put out a tremendous amount of fire. The QRF
commander reported at 1815 that he was pinned down and
unable to proceed. The task force aviators made additional
efforts to reach the second crash site. Two additional
rangers got off in an attempt to support the downed crew and
did not survive. Task Force Ranger was fixed, committed and
without reserves. The Americans did not have access to any
additional firepower except the QRF's AH-1 Cobra attack
helicopters that had very limited night capabilities. The
task force then sent an urgent plea to the UN forces in
Mogadishu for armored ground support. Though the UN armored
support was willingly given the ad hoc nature of the request
made it difficult to organize. The second convoy did not
move out until 2230 hours. Meanwhile, almost every soldier
in the raiding force had been wounded. Under fire from
nearly the time they left the gate the convoy of seventy
vehicles of which half were armored slowly wound its way
toward the rangers' perimeter. The convoy eventually
stopped 500 yards short of the rangers. American soldiers
then disembarked and fought their way the ranger's position.
By 0155 hours they effected the linkup and searched the

second crash site but found no one. The UN and American forces withdrew shortly after that.

The results of the final raid were as follows. Task Force Ranger had suffered 17 dead and 84 wounded, two helicopters destroyed and four seriously damaged[105]. The heavy losses, coupled with the brutal nature of the toe-to-toe fighting, horrified the US and Clinton administration. Aideed was still on the loose and his political stature had been tremendous increased by his ability to defy the UN and US. As a result President Clinton decided to take a different political tact to defuse the crisis. On 7 October, he announced the withdrawal of US forces from Somalia by 31 March 1994. On 9 October, Aideed, having also suffered heavy losses to the raiding forces and seeing the major obstacle to his seizing power leaving, declared an SNA cease-fire. The UN, lacking US support announced that UNOSOM II would also cease operations on 31 March. The UN spent the remaining time in country attempting to fashion a political solution to keep the country from slipping back into chaos. The result of TF Ranger's final raid was a complete change in US policy concerning Somalia and the eventual dissolution of the UN mission.

TF Ranger failed to generate either moral of physical surprise on its raids in Mogadishu. Their target, Aideed, was alerted by his public identification as an outlaw in the

UN and a 25,000 dollar bounty. There was no chance of creating moral surprise in either Aideed or the SNA.

TF Ranger still had the capacity to generate physical surprise. They had superbly trained soldiers and aviators who could conduct rapid, high optempo raids. However, the urban terrain and limited support base limited their mobility to helicopters. TF Ranger was a separate entity outside the UN structure so tanks and armored cars belonging to the other UN forces were not readily available. Additional firepower in the form of AC-130 gunships was absent for the fear of causing many civilian casualties. The result was the task force's ability to generate surprise rested solely on the training of the soldiers and the mobility of highly vulnerable helicopters. There was no margin for error. Additionally, the raiders were the only force in Mogadishu conducting night offensive operations that made it easy for the SNA to focus their countermeasures against them.

Aideed's forces learned how to destroy helicopters with gang fired RPGs at night. This removed the TF's capability to generate any physical surprise through high optempo. The optempo of the raiding force was now only equal to that of the SNA. The raiding force was unable to make up the lack of optempo with additional supporting fires. The sheer mass of SNA militiamen then overwhelmed the superbly trained

soldiers. The task force having only a single target have was given very difficult success criteria. Aideed was the only target of the task force and had been announced as such. Task Force Ranger had limited resources, a marginal intelligence picture, and a hostile urban population to contend with on the search for Aideed. The operational environment made TF unable to generate a high optempo or surprise. The lack of surprise made the task force vulnerable to countermeasures and defeat by the SNA.

CONCLUSION

The successful outcome of the raids conducted in Panama and their failure in Somalia offer several judgments about raids in OOTW environments. Terrain, population, and the effectiveness of deception/OPSEC efforts limit the ability of raiding forces to create surprise in an OOTW environment. Raids must be conducted rapidly to be effective. Their small size in relation to the target and their limited combat power gives but a small margin for error. High tempo operations allow the raiders to overcome their limited combat power by rapidly seizing their objective and withdrawing before the threat can effectively respond. Surprise is the element that creates the delay in the threat's response to the raiding force's actions.

Raids should not be stand alone operations but need to be conducted in conjunction with other offensive military actions. In Panama the raids conducted were a small part of the overall plan to invade the country and restore a functioning democracy. The capture of Noriega was the fourth objective of the American forces. In Somalia the raids were the only offensive operations being conducted by any UN or US forces in the country. Aideed was the only objective of the operation and the raids were the only mechanism for capturing him.

Raiders should have multiple targets to gain their objective and execute the raids quickly to insure surprise. The raiding forces attempting to capture Noriega conducted multiple raids, hitting all suspected Noriega hideouts in a short space of time . These raids were conducted simultaneously with the missions of the other task forces. In Somalia the raiding force conducted it's raids in isolation from UN operations. The raiders attacked suspected Aideed hideouts one at a time.

As in all military operations, time is a critical factor. Even raiding forces organized from highly skilled formations need time to develop trust in each other. In Panama the SOF forces that over a year to train and even travel to the area of operations to develop into cohesive task forces. In Somalia the task force had only 2-3 months

to prepare for the operation and had less than three weeks in country before they commenced operations. Time also had a great impact on the quality of intelligence preparation and collection. In Panama there were permanently stationed organizations who conducted the intelligence collection and additional analytical and command and control elements were brought in early to provide additional support. In Somalia the intelligence structures were not permanent and were in the process of being drawn down when the raiders arrived to conduct operations.

Raiders need to have access to adequate resources, particularly in firepower assets to make up their lack of mass and cover their highly vulnerable withdrawal. The long period preceding the Panama raids allowed adequate resources to be made available to the raiding forces. The task force had direct access to helicopter gunships, AC-130 Spectres, USAF fixed wing ground attack aircraft, armored vehicles, and additional regular combat formations if needed. In Somalia the task force had only assigned assets; a limited number of helicopter gunships, no AC-130 Spectres, and no ground attack aircraft support. Additionally, due to duplicative chains of command, they had only limited access to regular US combat forces or UN armored vehicles.

Raiders need to have and use a deception plan in conducting their missions. OPSEC is also critical to

minimize their vulnerability. American forces involved in
the Panama operations integrated deception operations in
their planning and preparation. Exercises in the canal zone
desensitized the PDF to the movement of US forces. The main
body of the invasion forces and the raiders struck from
outside Panama. The US forces' ability to deploy from the
US denied the PDF early warning. In Somalia no deception
was practiced. Prior to conducting operations the raiders
openly moved from the US to the airport in Mogadishu, the
center of their area of operations. The OPSEC for the raids
in Panama was very good. The train up of forces involved
took place in the US and was not readily linked to the
mission in Panama. The US forces in Panama were not visibly
augmented for the roles they were to play in the invasion.
In Somalia, the nature of the UN deliberations did not allow
for effective OPSEC to be practiced. The UN openly debated
the mission of the raiders and passed a resolution
authorizing it. The world media quickly reported the
arrival of the task force into Mogadishu and identified
Aideed as the target.

Raiders will be unsuccessful if they fail to achieve
surprise against their target. In Panama the raiders
achieved surprise. The deception preparations prior to the
invasion lulled Noriega and the PDF into believing the US
would not attack and created the potential for moral
surprise which the American forces then exploited. The high

tempo of the forces and speed of their attack overwhelmed the astonished PDF forces. The generated material surprise denied PDF leadership the time to respond and issue orders. In Somalia moral surprise was lost early when Aideed was named the target of the US efforts and a reward placed on his head. Material surprise was lost over time as the raiders conducted the same type of raid repeatedly and then conducted the last raid in daylight.

The success and failure of raids in the OOTW environment will always be linked to the ability of the raiding forces to generate surprise. Deception and OPSEC operations work to deny the enemy any preparation and create the potential for surprise. High tempo operations activate the potential moral surprise and use material or physical surprise to enhance its effects. Flexibility, agility, and firepower work to extend the impact of material surprise until the withdrawal of the raiding forces. Raids can be successfully conducted in an OOTW environment. However, the raids will always be high risk and their margins of success very small.

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